

# FACT SHEET FORAGE BUDGETING

## Improving the accuracy and precision of forage budgeting

Picture a world where you could receive accurate estimates of the feed supply, every five days, in every paddock.... Imagine having certainty over your feed forecast.

Useful satellite data is now commercially available at the property scale. Territory NRM works with Northern Territory cattle producers to use satellite technology to make better grazing and fire management decisions.

### What is the challenge?

The NT has vast landscapes, a diversity of land types and highly variable seasons. These factors lead to dramatic variation in the forage supply from year to year and across the landscape. Until now it has been very hard to accurately estimate how much forage is in the environment at any point in time.

### What is forage budgeting?

Forage budgeting is a process for estimating how much palatable pasture is available in the environment, and working out how many livestock the pasture can support to achieve good production and environmental outcomes.

### Why is accurate forage budgeting important?

When grazing demand and the pasture supply are in balance, it leads to healthy livestock, optimal beef production and prevents the over-utilisation of palatable pastures.

Over-utilisation of pastures can have negative impacts on environmental values, livestock productivity and business performance.



Photo credits: Dionne Walsh

**FARMING FOR THE FUTURE**

This project contributes to the NT NRM Plan



For more information:

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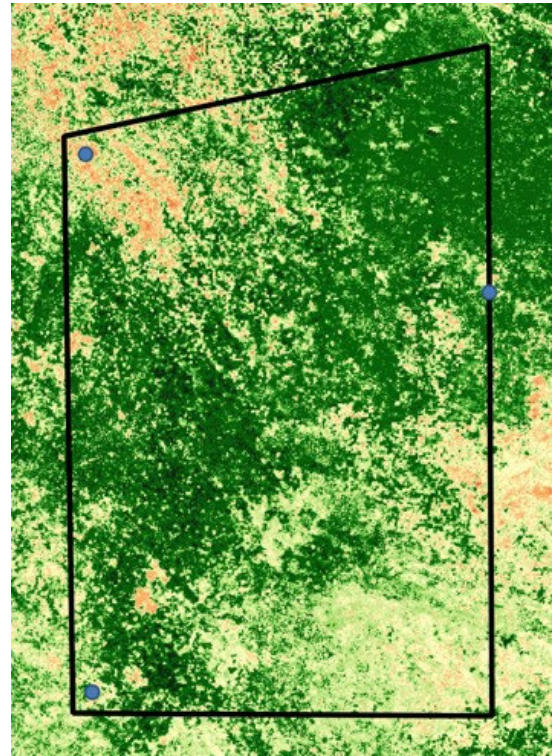
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# FACT SHEET - FORAGE BUDGETING

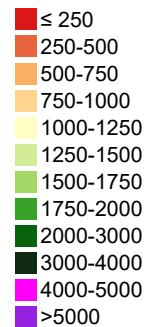
## How can the latest technology improve forage budgeting?

- High resolution satellites overcome the challenges of measuring the amount and quality of the pasture supply over vast areas
- You can get data and feed maps for all parts of the property – this is great when you have areas that you can't access by road
- Pasture biomass, pasture quality and ground cover data are available every 5 days (via a commercial subscription service) so you can monitor changes across the year
- The integration of the satellite data and the on-ground knowledge of producers leads to more accurate budgeting
- It is easier to work out how many cattle can be run and to predict how long the feed will last in different paddocks

As part of the Forage Mapping for Resilient Landscapes program, Territory NRM has supported 10 beef producers to trial satellite-assisted pasture management with great results. We have also trained 19 industry advisors to help support pastoralists to use this technology.



Total standing dry matter (kg/ha)



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